R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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AN UMBRELLA OF THREE EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS - ONE EACH IN--OVERTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE, WEWAHITCHKA, FLORIDA, WHEELER COUNTY, GEORGIA. THE RURAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

SOUTHERN ASSN. OF COLL. AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE DANFORTH AND NOYES FOUNDATIONS, A CONSORTIUM OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND AGENCIES HAVE COLLABORATED IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS IN SPECIFIED RURAL AREAS. SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT ARE--(1) EFFECTIVELY INTERVENE SO THAT A CYCLE OF ACCUMULATED DEFICITS IN CERTAIN LEARNING SKILLS WILL BE INTERRUPTED, (2) DEMONSTRATE THAT AS RURAL SCHOOL STUDENTS IMPROVE THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND LAYMEN WILL IMPROVE THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF AND EMPATHY TOWARD THE STUDENTS, AND (3) DEMONSTRATE THAT STUDENTS WILL RECEIVE MANY BENEFITS WHEN THE RESEARCH AND THEORY OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL ARE COMBINED WITH THE PRACTICAL KNOW-HOW OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS. RURAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN THREE COUNTIES ARE PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROJECT WHICH INVOLVES 5,481 STUDENTS. ELEVEN INTERVENTION COMPONENTS, WHICH ARE BEING USED TO ACCOMPLISH THE FIRST OBJECTIVE, ARE LISTED IN THE REPORT. SIX OF THESE COMPONENTS ARE COMMON TO ALL THREE COUNTIES. THE REPORT CONCLUDES WITH A LIST OF KEY PERSONNEL, THEIR POSITIONS, AND THE INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES, OR ORGANIZATIONS THEY REPRESENT. (JS)

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THE RURAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

An "Umbrella" of Three Educational Improvement Programs — One Each In:

OVERTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE
WEWAHITCHKA, FLORIDA
WHEELER COUNTY, GEORGIA

Sponsored By

THE EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT,
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Jointly Funded By

THE DANFORTH FOUNDATION
St. Louis, Missouri

and

THE JESSIE SMITH NOYES FOUNDATION
New York, New York

FOREWORD

America's image as an agrarian society is yielding to a culture pattern that is highly industrial and technical. However, there are and will remain for some time significant pockets of rural dwellers whose contributions to the nation's life are unquestioned. Here a focal point of hope for the development of the appropriate social behavior for life in America is the public school.

Much has been said and written about the limitation in educational opportunity in rural areas. Far too little has been done to strengthen educational services for rural area residents. It might be concluded then that what is really needed is the desire and the ability to overcome insofar as is possible the limitations inherent in the educational life of the rural school. This means that if pupils in the rural areas of the deep south are to receive an education commensurate with their needs, interests, and abilities, programs of educational improvement proportionate to those operating in urban centers must be provided. In no other way can it be demonstrated that rural school improvement in the deep south is an educational concern — not an educational neglect.

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I. IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECT

The Rural Education Improvement Project sponsored by the Education Improvement Project of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is a consortium of educational institutions, organizations and agencies collaborating in an effort to improve the educational performance of disadvantaged pupils in rural areas from pre-school through high school. The project currently includes a program in one rural center in three states (Florida, Georgia and Tennessee). It is planned to establish such a program in a rural center in each of the other eight states in the SACS region — Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.

II. PURPOSES OF PROJECT

The purposes of the rural education improvement project are:

a. To identify through appropriate vehicles of demonstration the relative effectiveness of a number of interventions designed to interrupt the vicious cycle of accumulated deficits in certain "learning" skills and in certain "learning to learn" skills which disadvantaged pupils in rural areas tend to manifest;

b. To demonstrate the inter-relatedness of the child-family-community-school complex by showing that as rural school youngsters improve their academic performance, parents, teachers, and lay citizens also improve their understanding of and empathy toward these children and the degree of disadvantage they manifest;

c. To demonstrate that when the research findings and theoretical concepts of college and university personnel are blended with the practical know-how of elementary and secondary school educators, the pupils affected reap a combination of benefits which neither university personnel nor public school educators working separately can provide.

III. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT

As may be observed in Chart I, in two instances (Wheeler County, Georgia and Overton County, Tennessee), the project includes the total county public school system. In a third instance (Wewahitchka, Florida), the program is limited to serve one town in the county (Gulf) school system. Chart I also portrays the names and location of all participating institutions, agencies, and organizations in the project.

CHART I

Sponsoring Agency	Rural Center School System	Cooperating Institutions and Organizations (Name and Location)
EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT Southern Association of Colleges and Schools	OVERTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE	Tennessee State Department of Ed. Nashville, Tennessee
		Tennessee Technological State Univ. Cookeville, Tennessee
		Middle Tenn. State University Murfreesboro, Tennessee
	WEWAHITCHKA, FLORIDA	Florida State Dept. of Education Tallahassee, Florida
		Florida A & M State University Tallahassee, Florida
		Florida State University Tallahassee, Florida
		Gulf Coast Junior College Panama City, Florida
	WHEELER COUNTY, GEORGIA	Georgia State Dept. of Education Atlanta, Georgia
		Albany State College Albany, Georgia
		Georgia Southern College Statesboro, Georgia

IV. PUPIL ENROLLMENT AND INTERVENTION COMPONENTS IN THE RESPECTIVE RURAL CENTER PROGRAMS

The 5,481 pupils participating in the rural education program have access to a variety of interventions all designed to interrupt the vicious cycle of accumulated learning deficits which have been a part of the experiences of the pupils in this project. As Chart II reveals, the intervention components common to all three centers are: 1) Teacher Education; 2) Communication Skills Development; 3) Family Involvement; 4) Cultural Enrichment; 5) School-Home-Community Agent Service; 6) Non-Professional Staff Aide Service.

CHART II

RURAL CENTER	Number of Pupils In The Program (1967-1968)			INTERVENTION COMPONENTS IN PROGRAM
	Boys	Girls	Total	
OVERTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE	1,816	1,612	3,428	1. Teacher Education (In-Service and Pre-Service) Including principals, supervisors, guidance counselors, classroom teachers, etc. 2. Communication Skills Development 3. Tool Technology and Integrated Industrial Arts 4. Family Involvement 5. Cultural Enrichment 6. School-Home-Community Agent Service 7. Non-Professional Staff Aide Service
WEWAHITCHKA, FLORIDA	406	341	747	1. Teacher Education (In-Service and Pre-Service) 2. Communication Skills Development 3. Family Involvement 4. Cultural Enrichment 5. School-Home-Community Agent Service 6. Non-Professional Staff Aide Service
WHEELER COUNTY, GEORGIA	686	620	1,306	1. Teacher Education (In-Service and Pre-Service) 2. Communication Skills Development 3. Extended School Year Program 4. Continuous Progress in Learning 5. Integrated Industrial-Technical Education Program 6. Focus on "Learning to Learn" Program 7. Family Involvement 8. Cultural Enrichment 9. School-Home-Community Agent Service 10. Non-Professional Staff Aide Service
TOTAL	2,908	2,573	5,481	

V. DURATION OF PROJECT AND FUNDING SOURCES

This is a five year program starting with the fall semester of 1967-1968[a] and concluding with the second semester of the school year 1971-1972.

CHART III

RURAL EIP CENTER	Source of Funds (5 Year Period)		
	Danforth Foundation	Noyes Foundation	Total
Overton County, Tennessee	$ 350,290	$ 50,000	$ 400,290
Wewahitchka, Florida	337,245	50,000	387,245
Wheeler County, Georgia	457,510	50,000	507,510
TOTAL	$1,145,045	$150,000	$1,295,045

VI. KEY PROJECT PERSONNEL REPRESENTING THE PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Each rural center has a Project Committee composed of the persons indicated in Chart IV. This committee serves as the governing board for the project. The Project Director (Overton County, Tennessee) and the Project Coordinators (Wewahitchka, Florida and Wheeler County, Georgia), serve as administrative directors of the respective programs. They and their respective project staffs provide the specific operative services for the project.

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[a] Some aspects of the Teacher Education component in the project were conducted by each of the three rural centers in the school year, 1966-1967.

CHART IV

CENTER	Key Project Personnel and Position	Institution, Agency or Organization Representing
OVERTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE	Illard J. Hunter, Superintendent	Overton County Schools
	Wilbur C. Smith, Project Director	Overton County REIP
	Roy Jones, Coordinator, Curriculum and Supervision	Tennessee State Department of Education
	Hoyle Lawson, Professor	Tennessee Tech. University
	Sam H. Ingram, Dean, School of Ed.	Middle Tenn. State Univ.
WEWAHITCHKA, FLORIDA	R. Marion Craig, Superintendent	Gulf County Schools
	Harrell E. Holloway, Principal	Wewahitchka High School
	Mrs. Betty G. Owens, Project Coordinator	Wewahitchka REIP
	Burke Scisson, General Consultant in Education	Florida State Department of Education
	Leander L. Boykin, Dean	Florida A & M University
	M. O. Alston, Dean, School of Ed.	Florida A & M University
	William L. Maloy, Assistant Dean, School of Education	Florida State University
	William Nunn, Assistant Director, Continuing Education	Florida State University
	Garth Blake, Director, Student Teaching	Florida State University
	Richard Morley, President	Gulf Coast Junior College
	Harry N. Murphy, Dean	Gulf Coast Junior College
WHEELER COUNTY, GEORGIA	William S. Clark, Superintendent	Wheeler County Schools
	Mrs. Gwen Flanders, Project Coordinator	Wheeler County REIP
	Mrs. Catherine Kirkland, Coordinator of Adult Education	Georgia State Department of Education
	Thomas M. Jenkins, President	Albany State College
	William E. Lightfoote, Chairman, Division of Education	Albany State College
	Miss Maudecca Wilson, Div. of Ed.	Albany State College
	Zach Henderson, President	Georgia Southern College
	Starr Miller, Chairman, Div. of Ed.	Georgia Southern College
SACS	Donald C. Agnew, Director	Education Improvement Proj.
	John E. Codwell, Associate Director	Education Improvement Proj.
	George C. Seward, Associate Director	Education Improvement Proj.